

Along the Lincoln Highway



The Newsletter of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association
Spring 2005 Volume 10 Issue 1

Iowa Nominates LaFollette New State Director.

The re-organized Iowa LHA has only known two State Directors in its 13-year history, but a third will assume the post in June.

Jeff LaFollette of Dixon is currently Clinton County Consul and Vice President for the Iowa LHA. He was nominated by the Iowa Board of Directors (County Consuls) at the Winter 2005 meeting, and his name goes on the ballot for consideration by the national membership this spring.

A State Director's tenure in office is mandated to run a maximum of two consecutive 3-year terms, and Paul Walker's second term will expire this year. Walker took over the State Director helm from charter Director Bob Ausberger in 1999.

LaFollette worked actively last year painting the LH tri-color on poles in Clinton county, and is engaged in a project to save the historic 1920's Syracuse bridge and turn it into an interpretive LH site.

Jeff's experience includes serving on the board of directors of the Route 66 Association since 1996 and as its president from 1999-2004. Jeff also organized the Illinois Route 66 motor tour from 1998-2001 and attended Route 66 national conferences from 2001-2004. He also was on the committee that created the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program, currently being implemented by the National Park Service. Jeff attended those planning meetings in Oklahoma City, OK in 2000 and Albuquerque, NM in 2002.

Jeff is also vice-president of the St. Patrick's Cemetery Board in Big Rock, Iowa and also currently serves on the city council in Dixon, Iowa. Let's all congratulate Jeff on his nomination as Iowa State Director! L

LH Symposium April 16th in Linn County.

Linn County, Iowa, has a treasure running through it! Our nation's first transcontinental highway, 1913-1928, touched four of our cities: Lisbon, Mt. Vernon, Marion and Cedar Rapids.

Mark your calendar! You are invited to join us for our Lincoln Highway Symposium Saturday, April 16, 2005, beginning at 9 a.m. and lasting through the afternoon. This special event is an outgrowth of the Linn County Historic Preservation Commission.

We will be hosted at the Carl and Mary Koehler History Center building at First Avenue and 6th Street SE, Cedar Rapids. Attendees will enjoy feature presentations by Drake Hokanson, popular speaker and author of *The Lincoln Highway, Main Street Across America*; Carol Ahlgren of the National Park Service; other Iowa Lincoln Highway Association dignitaries Lyell Henry, Van Becker and more.

This is a free all-day event. A light lunch is planned to be available on site. The Linn County Board of Supervisors as well as the cities of Lisbon, Mt. Vernon, Marion and Cedar Rapids have endorsed this event. L



Have Spare Tire,
Will Travel.

Van and Bev Becker's Have Spare Tire, Will Travel alternates with Jeff LaFollette's Between the Rivers.

* * *

Let's start by cleaning the desktop while the news is still timely.

Regular readers will recall our ongoing efforts to draw a connection between the Lincoln Highway and the early days of radio. Long-time Iowa Lincoln Highway member Tom Farland shares my enthusiasm for vintage radio. He recently sent the following email. There is one very familiar name that LH enthusiasts will surely recognize. I share Tom's email here for your interest and enjoyment."

Yesterday I got a bunch of tubes and stuff consigned to me for eBay, including a '1926-1927 Radio Station Directory and Trouble Finder,' published by Roth-Downs Mfg. Co. of the Twin Cities. I was pleasantly surprised to note the following entry on p. 28: Call sign WABX was registered to Henry B. Joy in Mt. Clemens, Mich. and was listed as 500 watts on a wavelength of 246 meters. Let's see, I'm supposed to know how to do this.. uh ...well...if I did the figuring right, that would have been roughly 1220 kilocycles. [kcs]

"So a little further research at www.michimedia.net/history/am.html shows that the station was licensed to Joy in December, 1923 on 1110 kcs. Then, by June 30th, 1925, he was on 1220 kcs with 150 watts, but was gone by the following June. Apparently he didn't last until the big shake-up in '28 when so many stations were forced off the air.

"In the late 60's the call WABX resurfaced for a time and became locally famous as an 'underground' FM rock station, again in Michigan. Now it's apparently an FM classic rock station in Evansville, Indiana."

* * *

Patience now — this one *does* relate to the Lincoln Highway.

This year's Super Bowl was...well, a football game. But one of those \$2.3-million-per-half-minute TV commercials really rang a bell.

Volvo made a big advertising splash with their new high-performance sport utility vehicle Model XC90 V8. They claimed it was "powerful enough to send you to SPACE!"

Hmmm... The ad had great graphics and eventually told the viewer how to "LAUNCH your chances to win." OK, if you won the space flight, it will be a sub-orbital flight with Virgin Galactic on a commercial passenger-carrying spaceship. Volvo is still running the TV ads months after the game.

Let's see...Buy a product, win a trip into space. Sound familiar? This gimmick has been used before... *long* before. Think little red signs.

**FREE—FREE
A TRIP
TO MARS
FOR 900
EMPTY JARS**

Burma Shave

Arliss French of Appleton, Wisconsin seized upon the Burma Shave challenge. He presented his 900 empty jars and was ready for the vacation of a lifetime. The Burma Shave people—with much publicity—sent Frenchy and his wife to Mars, Germany (pronounced Mars, spelled Mörs—near Dusseldorf). With a big radio and newspaper photographers' send off, a great time was had by all!

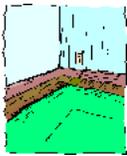
* * *

Good News! Early spring has found the Mt. Vernon Road Business Association again placing Lincoln Highway banners along Mt. Vernon Road where the LH enters Cedar Rapids from the east. What a sight! Three dozen banners stretching for blocks! Tom Glanz of the MVRBA says there are about eight more yet to place. The group is mounting their new banners to the poles with 4" lag bolts instead of the old "radiator clamps." Hats off! Looks great!

* * *

Our beloved 1928 markers keep popping up. In late February, '05, another 1928 marker appeared on eBay. The seller was located somewhere in north-central Iowa. The top portion of the marker looked great with the medallion intact and colors bright, but the post was short—broken off above the bury-line notch.

The seller did not know the original location. There were 16 bids that topped out at \$1,676, however the reserve price was not met and the marker went unsold. Wow! One marvels at the stratospheric reserve price, but also at the obviously elevated market value placed on markers. What would an intact post have garnered? L



The President's Corner

by Bob Stinson.

Here it is, time for my second President's Corner message and it seems like I just wrote the last one. It is said that time flies when you are having fun, and I must agree. It has been fun serving as President of this organization and I look forward to the remainder of my term. Time will certainly fly as the date for the 2006 LHA National Conference approaches. We all need to be working on our tasks assigned at the last Directors' meeting. We have the perfect location and the finest group of folks in the LHA. With that combination, I am confident it will be great.

I would like to take a moment to send a sincere happy birthday wish to one of the nicest ladies I have ever known. Norma Berns' 80th birthday is April 1st. She is a tireless worker and proponent of the Lincoln Highway. She has a vast knowledge of Carroll County history and can speak with authority on the LH as well as many other topics. She may even know where some of that Templeton Rye is stashed! Her sweet spirit and cheerful disposition brighten every Lincoln Highway meeting. May God bless you on your birthday, Norma and may you have many, many more.

I hope everyone is making plans to attend the ILHA meeting and tour coming up on Saturday, April 9th. It's shaping up to be a good one. Always personable Jeff La Follette will lead us on a tour of the Lincoln over in his neck of the woods. Personally, being a Jefferson Highway boy from Des Moines, I have not spent much time exploring our highway in the eastern part of Iowa, so I am really looking forward to a new adventure in Clinton County.

Also on the program is *The Man from Utah*, Rollin Southwell. Rollin will give a presentation on the Fisher Pass Monument. He will also share the knowledge he has gained in putting on a national conference.....boy, we can use some of that, huh!

Finally, I just want to say that I never cease to be amazed by the genuinely nice people who share our passion for the Lincoln Highway. I was in Ames a couple of weeks ago and had some spare time, so I stopped by the Iowa Department of Transportation Library to do some research for my Jefferson Highway road guide project. I was finally able to put a face with the voice on the phone when I finally got to meet Hank Zalatel in person.

I received a warm welcome and we enjoyed a lengthy conversation. He graciously located all the information he had on the Jefferson, some wonderful historic artifacts, and allowed me to copy all that was of interest to me. He also presented me with a copy of a great, old Iowa highway map from the 1920's.

This man has done a tremendous service to all of us who revere history in his efforts to preserve the history of transportation in Iowa. If not for his diligent work, a huge piece of Iowa history would probably have ended up in the dumpster. If you are in Ames, stop by and take a look at his vast collection and tell him "thanks" for his efforts.

That's all for now. See you on April 9th.

Happy Highways,
Bob

See YOU on the Lincoln Highway! This issue's new members..

Bob and Margaret Blumenschein Omaha, NE
 Carroll Chamber of Commerce Carroll, Carroll Co. ^L
 City State Bank (Corporate) Ogden, Boone Co. ^L
 Farner-Bocken Company Carroll, Carroll Co. ^L
 Carl Johnson Hillside, IL
 Donald Johnson Cedar Rapids, Linn Co. ^L
 Junction Bar & Grill (Fred & Pam Thorpe)
 Grand Junction, Greene Co. ^L
 Thomas G. Lynch Jefferson, Greene Co. ^L
 Rebekah Marsh Ames, Story Co. ^L
 John and Joan Niland Colo, Story Co. ^L
 Niland's Cafe Colo, Story Co. ^L
 Gary Paarman DeWitt, Clinton Co. ^L
 Robert Palmer Caledonia, MI
 Dean Soenksen Cedar Rapids, Linn Co. ^L
 Dorothy Thrush Catlett, VA
 John and Dorothy Zimmerman Scranton, Greene Co. ^L

^LIowa Lincoln Highway County

Ramblings Along the Lincoln Highway.
Minutes of the Winter 2005 Iowa LHA Meeting
Watson's Grocery / Community Center
State Center, Iowa
8 January 2005.
 Submitted by Su Aros, Secretary.

Twenty-four ILHA members gathered at Watson's Grocery in State Center for refreshments and visiting (coffee and meeting room arrangements compliments of **Catherine Noble** and **Jeff Merrill**; juice and pastries furnished by Carroll County – **Norma Berns** and **Su Aros**, and Iowa cookies provided by **Phyllis Stewart**, Story County). The group adjourned next door to the community center (under renovation) where **Bob Stinson**, in his first appearance as president, convened the meeting with the rapping of the gavel at 9:40am.

Motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the minutes of the October 9, 2004, meeting published in the Winter 2005 ILHA Newsletter with one correction to the header info – North Warren Fire Station is in Des Moines [*ed. regrets the error*].

Treasurer's Report

Stinson gave the Treasurer's Report in Joyce Ausberger's absence. Checking account balance: \$2,038; investment account balance \$4,306.41

Membership Report

Membership Coordinator **Cecil Stewart** announced nine new members added through July-Sept., 2004, plus another 5 or 6 in the last quarter. However, ten members dropped from the National membership list due to unpaid dues. Dropped-member list to be sent to Consuls for follow-up. The option of joining the Iowa association for \$10 as opposed to the \$30 national membership dues should be promoted as an option to lapsed memberships. The 336 names on the Iowa mailing list includes national and state memberships in addition to complimentary members.

State Director's Report

Paul Walker proclaimed 2007 annual Lincoln Highway Association conference will be held in Ft. Morgan, Colorado.

National Mapping Committee requests an Iowa representative. Paul to get answer to the suggestion that the state be separated into sections with volunteers (route experts) solicited by section.

President's Report – Bob Stinson

Stinson states that privilege of serving as this group's president for the next two years, including the hosting of the annual 2006 conference in Cedar Rapids, is appreciated and looked forward to.

All county consuls aretowithlocal county officials to determine interest and cooperation in marking the route, where it runs on county highway right of ways, utilizing LHTP historic route signage (12x18 metal signs).at the county level will bring us closer to gettingthe balance of the state marked, with the ambitious goal of completing this in time for the 2006 LH conference in Cedar Rapids.Details for payment of the signs will be addressed at future ILHA meetings.Thanks to Bob Owens for his accomplishments in marking the routein Greene County!

In addition to the Lincoln Highway, there are many other old "named" highways of interest in Iowa for members to explore.

Business Meeting

Bill Smith (new member present from Greene County) and Van Becker will pursue interest in a Ham Radio Operators-sponsored LH promotional event (similar to a Route 66 Association event in 2004) and will report back at April meeting.

Keith Whitlatch welcomed back as the new Cedar County consul. Keith's email is kwhitl1601@aol.com.

Iowa LHA State Director nomination: Motion made, seconded and carried to nominate **Jeff LaFollette**. Paul Walker's 3-year term expires in June 2005; LHA by-laws mandate maximum two consecutive three-year terms. After national election results in June, ILHA will address a replacement for the office of VP/President-elect that Jeff currently holds. Jeff to write a 150-word bio (due to Su by January 31) for the state director ballot that will be included in the Spring 2005 LH Forum.

2006 National LH Conference – Cedar Rapids. **Walker** presented an overview of planning that has been done to date, detailing all aspects of the conference and outlining the various positions and duties. Paul will issue a separate report on this activity, documenting suggestions, action items and members who volunteered to take on various responsibilities. **Mike Kelly** shared video clips, which are planned as part of the Iowa conference promo video to be shown at the Ely conference. Paul will also be meeting with county and community officials to discuss and plan for the 2006 Conference bus tours coming through their towns.

County Consul Reports

Clinton – Jeff LaFollette. Clean-up continues, weather permitting, on the Calamus bridge area. A Heileman's beer sign, which was part of the now defunct Ants Roadhouse, was found in the public area near the bridge and rescued by Jeff. Jeff and Annette look forward to hosting the April meeting/tour in De Witt.

Cedar – Keith Whitlatch. Old county jail restored and turned into a museum. Old canopied gas station under restoration. Keith has an old Colonial bread sign in his collection. Working with the local Lions Club on how to leverage both groups for some co-promotion efforts. Looking forward to hosting the October meeting in Cedar County.

Tama – Allan Richards. Downtown Tama mural re-painted/touched up. King Tower has new owners. Annual Lincoln Highway Bridge festival May 20/21, 2005. July ILHA meeting will be held east of Tama in a new winery. Ron Preston offered 2006 conference support from Belle Plaine historical organizations.

Marshall – Cathy Noble. Construction continues on the "Main Street Office." Help with ideas for a LH interpretive site for this building would be appreciated. The Artist Studio Tour in October had a good response. An old grocery store in New Jersey has offered its contents to Watson's Grocery. What they have would fill all the shelves in Watson's!

Story – Jeff Benson/Margaret Elbert. Nothing new to report.

Boone – Joe Moore. LH signs (from Greene County inventory) installed on bridge over Des Moines River. Photo on cover.

Greene – Bob Owens. 12x18 metal LH signs (purchased from LHTP) installed along the old route. Met with county engineers re the Eureka Bridge. Check out the new web site: Lincoln Highway Scenic Byway – Greene County, Iowa: www.freewebs.com/30byway/ Wonderful pictures of historic sites along the highway in Grand Junction, Jefferson and Scranton. Restoration of the Star Motel in Grand Junction continues with Ralph Miller leading the effort.

Carroll – Norma Berns. Wittrock's Motors, owners of the historic building and former Lincoln Highway control station, still looking for buyer. The old restored train depot is being considered as a new location for the Carroll Chamber of Commerce with a tourism center. **Su Aros** reported on a call she received from Bob Blumenschein, a LH member from Omaha. During the conversation he shared that he was one of the Boy Scouts who installed markers along the route back in 1928. His two markers were in Ontario, Iowa near Ames. Mike Kelly to call Bob for an interview.

Crawford – Position open.

Harrison – Elaine Ehlert telephoned her report to Bob. Elaine's LH display is available for the 2006 conference. The Historic Corridor group is restoring the Watson/Coop Garage in Woodbine.

Pottawattamie – No report.

The meeting adjourned at 12:40pm. Several attendees enjoyed lunch at Niland's Café in Colo.

*Su Aros, Secretary
Iowa Lincoln Highway Association*

We're Having a Conference and You're Invited!

*by Su Aros,
ILHA Secretary and Passionate Conference Participant.*

Planning your 2005 Vacation? Why not Ely, Nevada and the Annual LHA Conference, June 7-11, 2005?

Let the LHA conference organizers do the work for you. You'll see sites in the Old West you would never have visited! Promotional materials for the Ely conference state: "Enjoy the benefit of traveling back in time without the impediments of large cities, shopping malls or heavy traffic to hinder the traveler from experiencing the sights of this vast expanse. The beautiful basin and range diorama that define portions of Nevada were a daunting experience for the early traveler. Much remains the same as the first travelers on the Lincoln Highway experienced - dirty, rough and dusty. The original rules for the LH traveler still exist - "extra water, tires, food."

The planned tours include traveling over unpaved roads covering the 1915 to 1930 LH routes; a stop in Eureka, an old mining town that maintains the of yesteryear with lunch in the Opera House; a ride on the Ghost Train of Old Ely. Seminar topics include the Midland Trail, the Victory Highway, and LH Beautification.

As members of the LHA, whether it be for Iowa membership, your support the Association's efforts to, promote and mark the highway and help educate the general public about the highway and the historic sites along the way are appreciated. Attending the annual conference is a great way to meet other LH enthusiasts from across the country. The motivation gained from this experience begs the question "Why would members NOT attend?"

Conference registration details were issued with the winter issue of *The Lincoln Highway Forum* which national LH members receive. Details including registration forms are available at www.lincolnhighway.com. **The form and payment must be postmarked by May 4, 2005.** A note or an email and information will be sent your way, should you not have access to either option mentioned.

Please seriously consider being part of the Iowa delegation supporting the LH 2005 conference in Ely! L

Next time you are traveling the west end of U.S. 30 in Iowa, take a chance and cross the railroad tracks into the town of Woodbine. Once you motor over the Boyer River and Rock Island Line, your tires will be bumping along the longest stretch of original brick Lincoln Highway in Iowa.

Part of Woodbine's charm are the four canopy gas stations that are still part of the town's landscape. Two are still functioning service stations — one has been restored by our Historical Corridor Committee and the other is to become home to a new business fittingly named Brickstreet Station.

Brickstreet Station is a new travel stop for Woodbine and a source for Lincoln Highway merchandise and memorabilia. The Seichilone family, longtime residents of Woodbine, has a passion for old things as well as for travel, and they've put the two together to preserve a building and the nostalgia of days gone by.

When you come to Brickstreet Station you will find 1940-1950's gas station signs, lights, and the original canopy structure with some modern conveniences. Inside you can shop for gifts, souvenirs and novelty items and browse maps and review local and regional travel information. Enjoy an old-fashioned Coke or cup of coffee and share your stories of

the Lincoln Highway.

Grand Opening is Memorial Day weekend. Open Mon-Sat 9-5, Sun 11-4. Call Andrea Scichilone Reisz at 712-647-3030 for more information, or visit their website www.brickstation.com. L

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